



Norman Goldstein MD
Editor, Hawaii Medical Journal

Sir William Osler has been dead over 80 years. He authored more than 1,600 medical, philosophical, educational and historic essays and books, which live on and will continue to be published for centuries serving future physicians.

"The Principles and Practice of Medicine" published in 1892¹ contains a thousand pages of classic descriptions of diseases from Acute Gastritis to Syphilis and Tuberculosis. The signs and symptoms are still the same today. The treatments, fortunately, have changed, but this textbook should be in every physician's library. It is available in the Classics of Medicine Library edition, "Designed for the Use of Practitioners and Students of Medicine."²

William Osler was born in 1849 in Ontario, the son of a minister. He attended Toronto Medical School, transferred to McGill School of Medicine graduating in 1872. After spending a year in the medical clinics of London, Berlin and Vienna, he came to the U.S., then became Professor of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, and in 1889 rose to Chair of the New Department of Medicine at Johns Hopkins Hospital and Medical School.

Thus a new era of American medicine began:

- Rigorous admission requirements to medical schools were established.
- Applicants were required to graduate in a four year College Program, with two years of pre-med including biology, chemistry & physiology.
- French or German language skills were necessary.

After seeing the new requirements for medical schools, William Osler moved to Oxford, as the Regius Chair of Medicine. He died in December 1919 of Bronchopneumonia and emphysema. "He served three nations, all of which took him for their own; a feat unlikely to be repeated today."³

The American College of Physicians, headquartered in Philadelphia (where Osler came to the US in 1884), recently published the Quotable Osler, one of the ACP's most popular books. The Quotable Osler should be adjacent to your copy of the Principles on your primary library shelf.

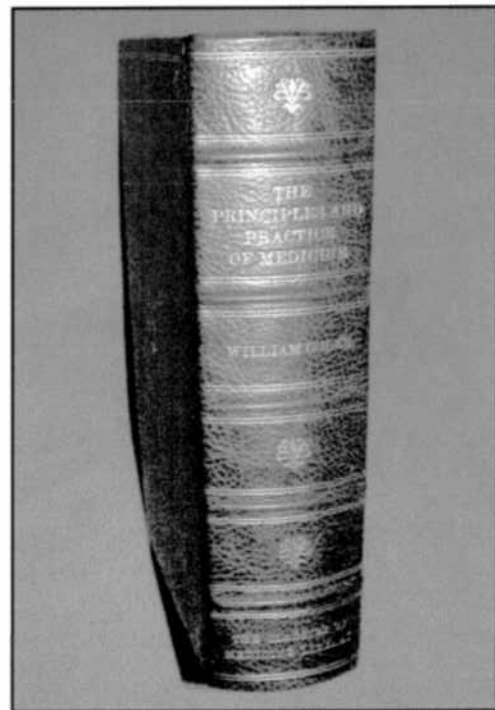
Sir William Osler

Richard S. Weeder, M.D., FACS wrote "Medicine, Meditation and Osler's Aequanimitas" which he presented at the Straub Clinic & Hospital Medical Staff on April 30, 2004. Dr. Weeder refers to Sir William's "Aequanimitas, with Other Addresses to Medical Students, Nurses and Practitioners of Medicine"⁴ first presented to the Graduating Medical School Class of 1889 at the University of Pennsylvania. Between 1932 and 1953, this has been presented to more than 150,000 graduating medical students.

Is it not time that we revisit the words of wisdom, experience and philosophy of Sir William Osler again and pass them on to future physicians?

References

1. Osler, William. The Principles and Practice of Medicine. D. Appleton & Co. New York, 1892
2. Osler, William. The Principles and Practice of Medicine. The Classics of Medicine Library; Division of Gryphor Editions, Ltd. PO Box 76108, Birmingham Alabama 35223, 1978
3. Silverman MD (Ed). The Quotable Osler, (The American College of Physicians), Philadelphia, 2003; XXI
4. Osler, William. Aequanimitas, with other Addresses to Medical Students, Nurses and Practitioners of Medicine. Philadelphia: P Blakiston; 1904



Collectors Edition of William Osler's "The Principles and Practices of Medicine," first published in 1892. Re-published by the Classics / Medical Library in 1978.